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INFO	LOG-00	MFA-00	NP-00	AID-00	A-00	CA-01	CCO-00
	CG-00	CIAE-00	COME-00	CTME-00	DEAE-00	DINT-00	DOEE-00
	DOTE-00	WHA-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	OIGO-00	FAAE-00
	FBIE-00	UTED-00	VC-00	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	INSE-00
	JUSE-00	L-00	VCE-00	M-00	AC-01	DCP-01	NRCE-00
	NSAE-00	OCS-03	OMB-01	DHS-00	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00
	ACE-00	P-00	SCT-00	SP-00	IRM-00	SSO-00	SS-00
	TEST-00	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00	USSS-00	ASDS-00	DTC-00
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R 151752Z NOV 02
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2407
INFO SECDEF WASHDC
JOINT STAFF WASHDC
NSC WASHDC
DOSAIRWING PATRICK AFB FL
USCINCSO MIAMI FL
DIRONDCP WASHDC
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

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E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: SNAR, MASS, PREL, PTER, CO

SUBJECT: HELICOPTER SUPPORT FOR INFRASTRUCTURE SECURITY
STRATEGY IN ARAUCA

REF: BOGOTA 9763

1. SUMMARY: ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT FY-2003
APPROPRIATIONS WILL INCLUDE \$71 MILLION TO FUND
HELICOPTERS AND AVIATION INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT THE

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: OSCAR J OLSON
DATE/CASE ID: 02 JUL 2004 200303455

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INFRASTRUCTURE SECURITY STRATEGY (ISS) IN ARAUCA, THE DEPARTMENT WILL SHORTLY BE FACED WITH THE CHOICE OF WHICH HELICOPTERS TO PROCURE. THE AIR MISSION IS TO MOVE A PLATOON IN RESPONSE TO THREATS ALONG THE FIRST 178 KILOMETERS OF THE CANO LIMON PIPELINE. THE CHOICE OF AIRCRAFT APPEARS TO BOIL DOWN TO SIKORSKY UH-60 BLACKHAWKS OR BELL HUEY II'S. EACH OFFERS UNIQUE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES, WHICH ARE DISCUSSED HERE. A DECISION BY THE DEPARTMENT ON WHICH AIRFRAME TO PURCHASE IS NEEDED BEFORE WE BEGIN DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE NECESSARY INFRASTRUCTURE. END SUMMARY.

2. IT IS IMPORTANT TO BEAR IN MIND THAT FROM THE \$71 MILLION WE EXPECT WILL BE APPROPRIATED FOR THE AVIATION COMPONENT OF THE ISS, WE MUST FUND OTHER THINGS BESIDES THE PURCHASE OF HELICOPTERS. THIS INCLUDES SPARE PARTS, CONTRACT MAINTENANCE, FUEL, AMMUNITION, GROUND SUPPORT EQUIPMENT, AND INFRASTRUCTURE FOR THE AIRFRAMES AND

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ASSOCIATED PERSONNEL. WE ARE STILL IN THE VERY EARLY STAGES OF ESTIMATING THE INFRASTRUCTURE COSTS, BUT \$10 TO \$12 MILLION IS PROBABLY A "BALLPARK" FIGURE. ADDITIONALLY, WE WILL NEED AIR CARGO TRANSPORT TO AND FROM ARAUCA. OUR EXISTING FLEET OF INL C-27'S IS ALREADY OVERTAXED AS ARE COLOMBIAN MILITARY TRANSPORTS. THIS IMPLIES EITHER LEASING OR PURCHASING ADDITIONAL CARGO AIRCRAFT.

3. THE SIKORSKY UH-60 BLACKHAWK IS WITHOUT DOUBT ONE OF THE MOST CAPABLE AIRCRAFT IN THE WORLD. IT CARRIES HEAVY LOADS, OPERATES AT HIGH ALTITUDES, AND CARRIES 16 OR MORE TROOPS. THE BLACKHAWK CAN FLY FARTHER, FASTER, AND PUT MORE TROOPS ON TARGET THAN A HUEY II. HOWEVER, YOU PAY FOR WHAT YOU GET. ACQUISITION COST ARE AROUND \$15 MILLION DOLLARS PER COPY AND FLIGHT HOUR COST IS ABOUT \$2,400. THE HUEY II, AN UPGRADE OF THE VENERABLE UH-1H FEATURING AN IMPROVED POWER TRAIN, COSTS ABOUT \$2.2 MILLION PER COPY AND ABOUT \$700 PER HOUR TO OPERATE. UNFORTUNATELY, IT ONLY CARRIES SIX SOLDIERS, AND IT CARRIES THEM MORE SLOWLY AND FOR SHORTER DISTANCES THAN THE BLACKHAWK.

4. FOR PURPOSES OF MOVING A QUICK REACTION PLATOON, TEN HUEY II'S COULD DO THE JOB. WITH AN 80 PERCENT OPERATIONAL READINESS RATE, SIX HELICOPTERS WOULD BE DEVOTED TO CARRYING TROOPS AND TWO WOULD ACT AS GUNSHIP

ESCORTS. PROCUREMENT OF TEN HUEY II'S WOULD BE ABOUT \$22 MILLION. AT \$15 MILLION A COPY, THE BLACKHAWK ALTERNATIVE IS MORE COMPLICATED. FIVE SIKORSKY'S WOULD BE NEEDED TO PROVIDE AN ALL BLACKHAWK FORMATION (ASSUMING UNCLASSIFIED

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AN 80 PERCENT OPERATIONAL READINESS RATE, THREE TROOPSHIPS, AND ONE GUNSHIP). SINCE FIVE BLACKHAWKS BY THEMSELVES WOULD BUST THE BUDGET, THE ONLY WAY TO MAKE THIS WORK WOULD BE BY PURCHASING A SMALLER NUMBER OF BLACKHAWKS, SAY THREE AT A COST OF \$45 MILLION, AND THEN POOLING THEM WITH THE EXISTING PLAN COLOMBIA FLEET (14 BLACKHAWKS, 25 HUEY II'S, 32 UH-1N'S) TO PROVIDE THE NECESSARY AIRLIFT. FOR EXAMPLE, WE MIGHT MAINTAIN THREE BLACKHAWKS AND TWO HUEY II ESCORT GUNSHIPS IN ARAUCA, FORWARD DEPLOYED FROM THE MAIN COLAR HELICOPTER BASE AT TOLEMAIDA. THIS WOULD OF COURSE DRAW AIRLIFT AWAY FROM THE COUNTER-NARCOTICS BRIGADE, BUT IT WOULD BE WORKABLE.

5. THERE IS AMPLE FAMILIARITY IN COLOMBIA WITH BOTH AIRFRAMES, AND THUS NO COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE THERE. THE GOC HAS EXPRESSED A STRONG PREFERENCE FOR BLACKHAWKS, POINTING TO THE SIKORSKY'S SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE AND PERHAPS LOOKING TO MISSIONS BEYOND PATROLLING THE PIPELINE. HOWEVER, WE SHOULD KEEP IN MIND THAT THE COLAR OPERATES ITS FMS BLACKHAWKS, WHICH DO NOT ENJOY OUR SUPPORT, AT AN AVERAGE 40 PERCENT OPERATIONAL READINESS RATE (HALF THE DESIRED RATE). THEY ARE HINDERED BY BUDGET AS WELL AS AN INABILITY TO MANAGE FLIGHT HOURS. IF WE ARE LOOKING AHEAD TO THE NATIONALIZATION OF THE ISS HELICOPTERS, HUEY II'S ARE FAR MORE LIKELY TO BE WITHIN THE COLAR'S MEANS.

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	P-00	SCT-00	SP-00	IRM-00	SSO-00	SS-00	TEST-00
	TRSE-00	T-00	USIE-00	USSS-00	ASDS-00	DTC-00	PMB-00

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R 151752Z NOV 02
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2408
INFO SECDEF WASHDC
JOINT STAFF WASHDC
NSC WASHDC
DOSAIRWING PATRICK AFB FL
USCINCSO MIAMI FL
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SUBJECT: HELICOPTER SUPPORT FOR INFRASTRUCTURE SECURITY
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6. COMMENT: EITHER AIRCRAFT COULD PERFORM THE ISS
MISSION, BUT LOOKING AT THE LIMITED BUDGET LIKELY TO BE
AVAILABLE FOR PROCUREMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND OPERATIONS
AND MAINTENANCE, WE BELIEVE THE HUEY II IS THE RIGHT
CHOICE. MOREOVER, WE UNDERSTAND THAT THIS PROGRAM WAS
BRIEFED ON THE HILL AS ONE WHICH WOULD USE HUEYS; WE HAVE
ALSO PRESENTED IT THAT WAY HERE TO OUR CONGRESSIONAL
VISITORS. GIVEN THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS AS
WELL AS THE GOC'S STRONG PREFERENCE FOR BLACKHAWKS, THIS
IS A DECISION WASHINGTON POLICY MAKERS WILL WANT TO
CONSIDER CAREFULLY.

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